

Mercury thermometers

We have had a few queries in recently about these so thought it worthwhile clarifying the situation.



It has not been legal to sell mercury thermometers in the UK (or most other mercury-containing instruments) since 2009, but there has been no legislation regarding the use of any purchased before then.

So if you have mercury thermometers you are perfectly entitled to use them. They are a little more responsive than other liquid in glass thermometers and can be slightly more accurate, but modern digital thermometers are more accurate than either, so there is certainly no need to use them.

If you are going to keep your mercury thermometers you should:

- Keep them separate from the other thermometers so they can't be used by mistake
- Only let them be used by competent people, staff or senior pupils.
- Not use them in situations where if they were to break they would release mercury vapour, such as in a melting point apparatus.

